



# London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

## CABINET

9 DECEMBER 2013

### EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE PUPIL PREMIUM SCRUTINY TASK GROUP

#### Report of the Cabinet Member for Education – Councillor Georgie Cooney

#### Open Report

**Classification:** For Decision

**Key Decision:** No

**Wards Affected:** All

**Accountable Executive Director:** Ian Heggs, Tri-Borough Director of Schools  
Commissioning

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## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The Overview & Scrutiny Board established the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group in July 2012 to investigate how schools in Hammersmith & Fulham were using the Pupil Premium to narrow the attainment gap between those pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals and those who are not. The Task Group's Final Report was agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Board on 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013 and an Executive Response to the Final Report was requested.

1.2 This report therefore presents the proposed Executive Response and seeks Cabinet's approval of the proposed response to each of the recommendations made by the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group.

## 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Cabinet approve the Executive Response to the recommendations made by the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group, as shown in Appendix A.

### **3. REASONS FOR DECISION**

- 3.1 Cabinet's approval is sought before the recommendations of the Scrutiny Task Group can be implemented. These recommendations were made following several months of investigation by the Task Group into the learning and best practise in existence and they can be implemented using existing officer resources and time.

### **4. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group was commissioned by the Overview & Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012 to review how Hammersmith & Fulham schools were using the Pupil Premium, in line with current Government policy, to narrow the gap between those pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and to consider national guidance and examples of local practice. In 2012/13 the Pupil Premium grant was £600 for each child receiving Free School Meals (FSM), Children Looked After (CLA) or with parents in the armed forces. In 2013/14, the Pupil Premium is rising to £1.875 billion, with schools receiving £900 per disadvantaged child. The grant is not ring-fenced and schools have the freedom to spend it as they choose. The only new statutory requirement is that they publish on their website their plans for the grant. The Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group therefore sought to find out best practice and guidance on the most effective use of resources to narrow the attainment gap and find some examples how the grant is being used locally.

- 4.2 The members of the Task Group were:

- Councillor Charlie Dewhurst (Chairman)
- Councillor Caroline Needham (Vice Chairman)
- Councillor Tom Crofts

- 4.3 The Task Group has interviewed a range of key stakeholders involved, considered written evidence and visited schools to find out how the Pupil Premium is being used in Hammersmith & Fulham and nationally. All schools were consulted on the recommendations set out in the final report via the Interim Report of the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group in May 2013. Its findings are presented in the Task Group's Final Report, which is attached as Appendix B.

### **5. PROPOSAL AND ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Task Group made five recommendations. Four of the recommendations seek to advise local schools on how best to utilise the Pupil Premium, and one recommendation relates to how the Council could support schools through the training it offers school governors. The recommendations do not have significant budgetary implications and can be implemented without requiring additional officer time and resources.

- 5.2 The Council's role in the day to day management of schools has reduced in recent years with schools being given increasing levels of autonomy. The recommendations offering guidance and best practise can therefore be shared with schools, but the schools will not be bound by the findings of the Scrutiny Task Group unless they wished to. Schools have, however, been involved in the scrutiny inquiry, either directly through providing evidence to the Task Group, or through the consultation undertaken with all schools through the Interim Report of the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Inquiry, which outlined all of the key proposals in the final report.

## **6. OPTIONS AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 6.1 Cabinet can choose to either endorse the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Task Group, reject them or amend them. If Cabinet decides to reject the recommendations then an explanation of why the findings of the Task Group were rejected might be requested by the Overview & Scrutiny Board.

## **7. CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 The Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group received written and oral evidence from a number of key stakeholders, including local headteachers and school governors, educational research organisations, Ofsted and the Borough Youth Forum. The findings of the Task Group reflect the evidence given by these groups and individuals. All schools were consulted on the key proposals through the Interim Report of the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Inquiry in May 2013. This served to engage schools in the recommended approaches in the Pupil Premium report and many schools have responded positively to the proposals. It is proposed that a further survey be undertaken by the Education & Children's Services Select Committee in 2014 to find out which schools have reviewed practice in the direction of the systematic approach to programme identification, evaluation, governance and communications proposed by the Scrutiny Task Group and their progress in narrowing the attainment gap.

## **8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Pupil Premium is designed to narrow the attainment gap for CLA and FSM children and the recommendations of the Task Group seek to make the Pupil Premium operate as effectively as possible. The report therefore is unlikely to have any adverse equality implications.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000**  
**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Description of Background Papers</b>	<b>Name/Ext of holder of file/copy</b>	<b>Department/ Location</b>
1.			

**LIST OF APPENDICES:**

Appendix A: The Executive Response to the recommendations made by the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group

Appendix B: The Final Report of the Pupil Premium Scrutiny Task Group and Case Studies